

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4-12 and 14-15 are pending. Claims 1, 4-9 and 12 have been amended. Claims 2, 3, 13 and 16-24 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1 and 13-15 stand rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daelmans (5,935,686) in view of Guidot.

Claim 1 has been amended to include limitations from cancelled claims 3 and 13, as well as further limitations from the specification. The inclusion of limitations from cancelled claim 3 overcomes the rejections under the combination of Daelmans and Guidot and it is respectfully requested that such rejections be withdrawn.

Claims 3-12 were rejected under U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Daelmans in view of Guidot and further in view of McBean.

As amended, claim 1 requires:

1. (Currently amended) A method of making product wraps, comprising the steps of:

causing a continuous strip of wrapping material, having~~presenting~~ at least two first bands of adhesive bands extending parallel with its longitudinal dimension, to advance along a predetermined path, the strip also having second adhesive bands extending transversely to the longitudinal dimension of the strip;

cutting the strip transversely along dividing lines to obtain a plurality of leaves each having~~presenting~~ longitudinal edges coinciding with relative dividing lines, the dividing lines also separating the second adhesive bands;

establishing at least one portion between the two first adhesive bands and coinciding with each transverse dividing line from which to initiate an easy tear along a direction substantially transverse to the longitudinal edges of the leaf,

generating, on each easy tear portion, at least one first notch on each dividing line, extending parallel to the longitudinal dimension of the strip and intersecting the dividing line,

generating a second notch, establishing at least one indentation, intersecting transversely each first notch; the second

notch coinciding with the dividing line to create a projection on an opposite longitudinal edge of each leaf that projects beyond the dividing line, the projection being divided into two transverse portions by the first notch which longitudinally extends along the projection itself, the first notch being limited in length so as not to extend longitudinally beyond the respective second adhesive bands and thereby intrude in a substantially centrally located product placement zone positioned between the second adhesive bands and the first adhesive bands of each leaf;

associating at least one product with thea respective product placement zonesubstantially central area of each leaf;

folding each leaf around the at least onea relative product and bringing together the two longitudinal edges to adhere the second adhesive bands and form a tubular sheath while positioning the second notches of the two longitudinal edges transversely offset from one another so that the first notches of the two longitudinal edges are also transversely offset from one another;

closing the ends of the tubular sheath to adhere the first adhesive bands and obtain a wrap around the product;

the step of generating the first notch and the second notch being implemented before the step of folding each leaf around the relative product.

The invention of claim 1 is generally shown, for example, in Figs. 3 and 4 of the present specification. A second notch (see reference numeral 8 for example) coincides with the dividing line (10) to create a projection (13) on an opposite longitudinal edge of each leaf (11) that projects beyond the dividing line (10), the projection (13) being divided into two transverse portions (9a and 9b) by the first notch (7) which longitudinally extends along the projection itself (13), the first notch (7) being limited in length so as not to extend longitudinally beyond the respective second adhesive bands (5) and thereby intrude in a substantially centrally located product placement zone (6) positioned between the second adhesive bands (5) and the first adhesive bands of each leaf (4). The foregoing use of reference numbers is for explanatory purposes only and is not intended to be used to limit the claims beyond what the claim language itself requires.

The projection first assists the user in locating the tear-off portion, and in being divided into two transverse portions, eases the tearing open of the wrapper by

the user. Furthermore, by limiting the length of the first notch so as not to intrude beyond the second adhesive bands into the closed product placement zone 6, the first notch provides a tear line for easily opening the wrapped product without compromising the sealed aspect of the product placement zone around the product (when the product is wrapped) until the user decides to open the wrapper.

Neither Daelmans nor Guidot disclose or suggest "generating a second notch, establishing at least one indentation, intersecting transversely each first notch; the second notch coinciding with the dividing line to create a projection on an opposite longitudinal edge of each leaf that projects beyond the dividing line". As acknowledged by the Examiner, Daelmans does not disclose an easy tear configuration at all. Guidot does disclose an easy tear configuration but does not disclose the use of a projection projecting beyond the dividing line.

McBean does disclose a projecting tab 20 that projects beyond dividing line 18, but none of McBean, Daelmans or Guidot disclose or suggest "the projection being divided into two transverse portions by the first notch which longitudinally extends along the projection itself". McBean discloses the use of two notches 14, but such notches are placed alongside the projecting tab 20. They do not divide the projecting tab 20 into two transverse portions. Rather, the projecting tab continues to remain whole even when manipulated to open the McBean wrapper, as it operates in conjunction with the pleat 12 to form a tear-off strip. In addition, none of McBean, Daelmans or Guidot disclose or suggest a first notch dividing the projection into two transverse portions where the first notch is "limited in length so as not to extend longitudinally beyond the respective second adhesive bands and thereby intrude in a substantially centrally located product placement zone positioned between the second adhesive bands and the first adhesive bands of each leaf".

For these reasons, the combination of Daelmans, Guidot and McBean does not disclose or suggest present claim 1, nor would the combined teachings of such

combination lead a person of ordinary skill in the art to arrive at the invention of claim 1. Therefore, such combination does not render obvious claim 1 and it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

All of the remaining claims depend from claim 1 and are believed allowable for the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for the further limitations contained therein.

In the European counterpart to the present application, an Opposition proceeding has been filed. The Opposition papers and references cited therein have been filed today in the present application under separate cover.

References D9 (DE4037269), D10 (EP0490822) and D13 (DE19541541/US6,110,092) cited in the Opposition, as well as US 5,489,060 previously of record in this case, all disclose the use of a projecting tab in a tear-off portion. However, none disclose or suggest "the projection being divided into two transverse portions by the first notch which longitudinally extends along the projection itself". Rather, in each of these references, a separate tear-off strip is attached to the wrapper to coincide with the projecting tab. Therefore, none of these references is any more relevant than McBean.

Reference D12 (Atkinson, US 2,263,835) cited in the Opposition discloses a projecting tongue 15 and perforated line 13 extending across an entire longitudinal dimension of the wrapper 10. As such, the perforated line intrudes into the portion of the wrapper enclosing the product. Atkinson does not disclose or suggest a first notch dividing the tongue 15 into two transverse portions where the first notch is "limited in length so as not to extend longitudinally beyond the respective second adhesive bands and thereby intrude in a substantially centrally located product placement zone positioned between the second adhesive bands and the first adhesive bands of each leaf". Thus, Atkinson does not cure the deficiencies of the combination of Daelmans, Guidot and McBean with respect to present claim 1.

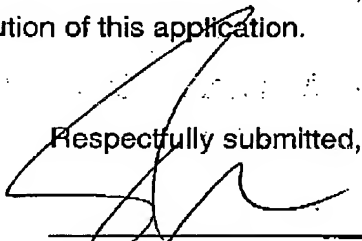
None of the other references cited in the Opposition is believed to be any more relevant to the patentability of amended claim 1 than the references discussed above.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the above rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All matters having been addressed above and in view of the pending claims and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the entry of this Amendment, the Examiners reconsideration of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Applicants counsel remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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